



**PRESS RELEASE**  
*Office of the United States Attorney  
Middle District of Florida*

**PAUL I. PEREZ**  
**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**

400 North Tampa Street  
Suite 3200  
Tampa, Florida 33602  
813/274-6000  
813/274-6300 (Fax)

300 North Hogan Street  
Suite 700  
Jacksonville, Florida 32201  
904/301-6300  
904/301-6310 (Fax)

501 West Church Street  
Suite 300  
Orlando, Florida 32805  
407/648-7500  
407/648-7643 (Fax)

2110 First Street  
Suite 3-137  
Fort Myers, Florida 33901  
239/461-2200  
239/461-2219 (fax)

Contact: Steve Cole ♦ Public Affairs Specialist ♦ 813/274-6352

**For Immediate Release**

February 22, 2005

**SAMEEH TAHA HAMMOUDEH AND NADIA IBRAHIM HAMMOUDEH PLEAD  
GUILTY IN FRAUD CASE**

United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced Sameeh Taha Hammoudeh, age 45, and Nadia Ibrahim Hammoudeh, age 42, both residents of Tampa, Florida, pled guilty today to charges of conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service and commit offenses against the United States, making false statements to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and filing a false tax return in 1998 with the Internal Revenue Service.

A federal grand jury in Tampa, Florida returned a multi-count indictment in August 2004 against Sameeh and Nadia Hammoudeh. The indictment charged the defendants with committing various crimes including conspiracy, tax fraud, immigration fraud and mail and wire fraud. According to the plea agreement, the defendants both were employed by the Islamic Academy of Florida, from September 1994 through April 2000, without authorization from the Immigration and Naturalization Service and in violation of their United States visas. Among other things, the defendants caused to be filed with the

Immigration and Naturalization Service documents that contained numerous false statements, in order to receive immigration benefits for themselves or their children. The defendants also failed to report the income that they received for their work at the Islamic Academy of Florida to the Internal Revenue Service and filed tax returns that substantially underreported their income. The defendants further filed a loan application and other documents with Washtenaw Mortgage Company that contained false statements regarding their citizenship and the source of their down payment, in order to obtain a home mortgage loan to purchase a house in Tampa.

Sameeh Hammoudeh pled guilty to one count of conspiracy, one count of making a false statement to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and one count of filing a false tax return. These charges carry a maximum sentence of 13 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$ 600,000.00, and a term of supervised release up to three years.

Nadia Hammoudeh pled guilty to one count of conspiracy, one count of making a false statement in an immigration application, and one count of filing a false tax return. These charges carry a maximum sentence of 18 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$600,000.00, and a term of supervised release up to three years.

Neither of the defendants is a United States citizen or a lawful permanent resident. As a condition of the plea agreements, the defendants agreed to stipulate to entry of an order of removal.

The case was investigated by special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Tampa, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Orlando Division, and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, Tampa. The case was prosecuted by Executive Assistant United States Attorney Terry Zitek and Trial Attorney Alexis Collins of the Department of Justice.